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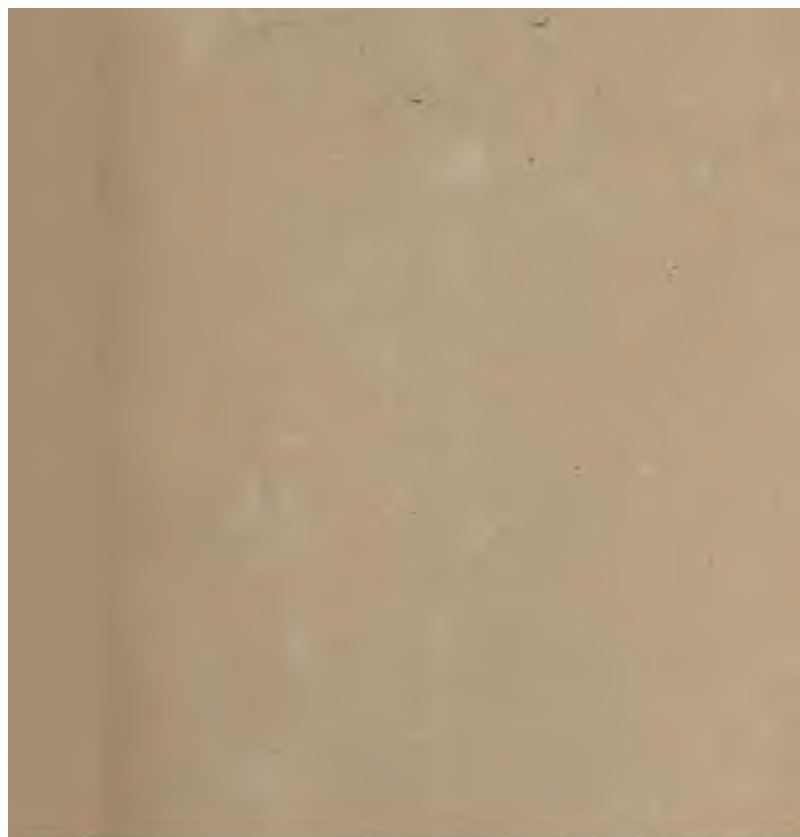
DROP

OR,



UNDER THE PENN

BY



*H. Brown from the
Author*

DROPS FROM THE OCEAN;

OR

LIFE UNDER THE PENNANT.

BY

CAPTAIN GEORGE H. K. BOWER,

C.B., R.N.

LONDON:
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GEO. BOWER, NOT JOE BOWERS;

OR,

"A ROSE BY ANY OTHER NAME WOULD SMELL
AS SWEET."

—:—

IN the year 1828, at the early age of eleven I commenced my career in the Navy, on board the "Blonde" frigate, commanded by Captain Lyons; and it was on joining her I, George H. K. Bower, was dubbed "Joe Bowers," the late possessor of which name was a celebrated person in Her Majesty's service, known more for his mischievous tendencies than anything else, I found out afterwards.

My *second* christening occurred in the following manner: We—my mother, father and myself—were taken on board in the captain's galley, from Portsmouth to Spit-head, where the ship was at anchor. The

first thing that was handed out of the boat was my desk, and on its arriving on deck, the officer of the watch (who was standing near the gangway) read the name engraved on the top, "Geo. Bower" (short for George), on which he exclaimed,

"By Jove! here's old Joe Bowers come to join."

Instantly, one of his brother officers, on looking over the side, replied,

"Nonsense, it's a youngster just out of the nursery I should think."

And to our surprise, we were received on reaching the deck by the officer of the watch, cap in hand, who was evidently trying to suppress a smile, which none of us could understand; and my little round chubby appearance in uniform, standing four feet five inches in my shoes, evidently added to their mirth, much to my discomfort; and all pride at being an officer in Her Majesty's service died out of my heart, and I felt much more inclined to hide my

small rubicund face in my mother's dress, and indulge in a good cry. Happily, before I gave way to what would have been a lasting disgrace to me in the minds of my messmates, Captain Lyons came to the rescue, he having heard all that had taken place before we reached the deck, and shaking my mother warmly by the hand, he said,

“Pray allow me, Mrs. Bower, to explain what was evidently a perplexity to you and our young friend just now. The fact was, the name on your son's desk was read by Mr. —— as Joe Bowers, and as that is the name of a very strange character in the service, it made him exclaim that the said Joe Bowers was joining the ship, thus causing great merriment to those assembled on deck.”

This explanation being given of behaviour which we thought rude, to say the least of it, and the officer of the watch duly apologising to my mother, rendered me much

more happy and content, still in perfect ignorance as to the attributes of the said Joe Bowers ; which, by the way, was perfectly immaterial to me, as long as my appearance had not been the cause of derisive smiles amongst the men with whom I had to make my home for a long time.

After a few months, finding I was always called Joe, I made up my mind to know something of the man I had been named after, and I regret to say, it was not complimentary to my personal appearance, and what I found out in after life of this celebrity, I must own I did not feel inclined to emulate.

One man told me he was a big burly fellow, with hair of a fiery red and bristly texture, a kind of cross between a hedgehog and a porcupine ; also that each individual hair split in two would make capital toothpicks.

Of one thing I felt sure, that my soft brown curly hirsute growth, would at least

deny the existence of the above named dental scavengers.

This little story only shows from what a slight thing one may gain a sobriquet, without the least merit to one's self, for I certainly should not have chosen the name of "Joe Bowers." However, it was chosen for me, and I must abide by it, for in and out of the service I am not known by any other name.

POTATO VERSUS WINE.

—:0:—

ON Christmas Day strange customs prevail on board some of Her Majesty's ships, affording much amusement both to officers and men, reversing the order of things being one of the hits of the day, such as petty officers doing the duties of boys, and *vice versa*. The boatswain and his mates pipe for the officers' dinner, the band plays for the ship company's. At twelve o'clock the captain, accompanied by the other officers, visits the lower deck, to admire the taste displayed by the men in decorating their various tables, &c., and tasting the plum puddings, in the magnitude of which consists a great deal of Jack's enjoyment.

This visit is brought to a close with three hearty cheers by the ship's company, so

cementing that good feeling between officers and men which is the back-bone of the service.

These customs, trivial as they may appear to people living on shore, afford a pleasing variety to the often monotonous life on board ship, particularly when on a foreign station, with scarcely a habitation in sight, and only ourselves to depend upon for recreation, &c. They not only remind us of "Old Father Christmas," but, what is of more value, dear home, and its dear old English customs, which no men in the world appreciate more than Jack when at sea, for, though his hands may be hard with honest toil, his heart is always soft on the thoughts of home.

I remember on one occasion we had to pass Christmas Day in the Dardanelles, and it was arranged that all the officers should dine together on that day, the warrant officers being included, and, for the better accommodation of all parties (our

number being rather large), it was decided to clear away two or three guns on the main deck. The day was lovely, and we had every prospect of success. The larder was teeming with game of various descriptions shot by the officers, the shore near us abounding with it. The pipe to dinner did not require a repetition, and in a short time we were all assembled at the festive board, thirty in number, each bent on enjoying the good things placed before us.

Like most dinners of this description, the clatter of knives and forks, plates and dishes, for a time defied all efforts at conversation. At last a lull came, which was taken advantage of by the captain trying to catch Mr. Beeswing's (the boatswain) ear, who was seated at the far end of the table, saying,

"The pleasure of a glass of wine, Mr. Beeswing?"

To which the old boatswain replied, with perfect composure,

“No, thank you, sir, I’d rather have a pertater!”

This answer, from its nature alone, commanded perfect silence, and the captain, fancying there must have been some mistake, repeated his request, to which the boatswain again returned the same answer, and adhered firmly to his preference for the festive potato. The captain, however, was equal to the occasion, and, turning with great gravity to one of the stewards, said,

“Take Mr. Beeswing the potatoes.”

This was enough, and from a dead silence burst forth peals of laughter from all present but the innocent cause, whose face exhibited intense astonishment, and after a short time he said, in injured tones, to the captain,

“Please, sir, what is h’all these gentlemen a laughing at?”

At which the captain thoroughly collapsed, and was obliged to join heartily in the laugh, much to the discomfort of poor

Mr. Beeswing, who was evidently trying to drown his injured feelings in copious draughts of grog.

In the midst of some story that was being told after dinner a heavy thud was heard, and, rising to ascertain the cause, we found, to our intense amusement, the boatswain had fallen under the table as drunk as the proverbial lord. To lay him on his back was the work of a moment, and, finding all efforts to extract any sound utterly useless, we constructed an impromptu bier, and, placing him upon it, we youngsters followed him with mournful steps, in single file, singing "The Dead March in Saul," and, after seeing him safely deposited in his berth, we covered him with peelings of apples and pears (the remains of the dessert) to represent flowers.

The next morning he appeared heartily ashamed of himself for imbibing to the extent he had, thereby causing his sudden and ignominious disappearance under the

captain's table, as he would insist on calling the impromptu rig-up of yesterday, still he was perfectly at a loss to know why all us fellows laughed so heartily at his preferring potatoes to wine.

Pacing the deck with a woe-begone expression on his face, he asked me anxiously if I thought the captain would punish him for his bad conduct the night before, to which I replied I did not think so, for all was given up to enjoyment on Christmas Day and to repentance the day after—the latter of which I am sure the poor old fellow was painfully realizing, if one could judge by the pale, melancholy expression on his face and the constant restless shivers that passed through him, the sight of which suggested to my mind it would have been better for him if he had also preferred potatoes to grog.

A VICTIM OF CIRCUMSTANCES;

OR,

MISTAKEN IDENTITY.

—:0:—

MISTAKEN identity is generally the cause of discomfort to any one who is the victim, but on more than one occasion I have realised much pleasure from being taken for some one else.

Once, when we were laying in the Bay of Naples, the captain had invited some of the English residents on board to luncheon, and to see the ship. All us youngsters were in the seventh heaven of delight at the idea of a lot of ladies coming off to see us, which is always refreshing to a sailor's heart, great or small.

The sun was shining superbly, the awning was spread and inviting the soft sea breeze under its sheltering wing, decks all trim

and clean, everything and everybody got up to receive visitors.

Party after party arrived on board and were received by the captain, till the deck had a most festive appearance. One lady, who had been seated some little time talking to her friends, looked very earnestly at me, and turning to the captain said (oh! spare my blushes),

“Who is that pretty little midddy?” To which he replied,

“Oh! that’s Mr. Bower,” and observing more people arriving, he went to receive them; when the lady rose, and holding her hand out towards me, said,

“How do you do? I know your parents very well; how were they when you heard last?”

I answered I was very well, as also were my parents from my last tidings of them; and feeling rather shy, I did not like to ask who she was, and how she came to know my people.

On the captain returning, he was told by the lady the same story about me, and she also asked him if I might come on shore and see her, to which consent was given.

The party being now made up for going round the ship, the Captain kindly said to me,

“Now, young fellow, the best thing you can do, is to come with us and be this lady’s cicerone;” which order I gladly obeyed, and made the most of my knowledge of things in general, and in the end I was invited by the captain to join the party at luncheon, much to the annoyance and envy of my messmates, who could not understand why I was chosen for so much attention and pleasure.

At last the time came for the party to break up, and on leaving the ship the lady (Mrs. Birt by name) begged the captain to allow me (whom she now called her young friend) to come and stay at her house for a week, and he, to my great joy, assented;

of course imagining the lady was really a friend of my relations; an affair, *I* must own, that did not trouble me the least. All I thought of (boy-like) was getting on shore and enjoying myself.

At tea that evening, when I informed my messmates the good fortune in store for me, their jealousy knew no bounds. One midddy, Bowyer by name, was perfectly wild with rage, as his friends had told him he would be sure to get invitations to stay with some very nice people at Naples.

The next day I packed up my small traps, and was sent on shore, an open carriage and -pair waiting for me, the grandeur of which almost took my breath away; and on being handed in by a tall footman, I felt all over the place, and with my small body could not make half enough of myself. Bang went the door, and off we started; I seated myself first facing the horses, and folded my little fat arms across my chest in a most artistic fashion, hoping

by my nonchalant manner that the passers by would think the whole affair belonged to me. Then I tried sitting with my back to the horses, and then ended in nearly tumbling head over heels out of the trap altogether, by the carriage suddenly stopping with a violent jerk at a large handsome house a little way out of the town.

Pulling myself together, and trying to look dignified, in spite of my red face and general discomfort, I tripped up the steps into the house.

Entering the drawing-room, I was received by Mrs. Birt and her daughters, who were most kind to me. After a conversation of a few monosyllables on my part, and great volubility on theirs, my hostess rang the bell, and bade the servant who answered the summons to shew me to my room—which was a spacious, splendidly furnished apartment, with mirrors all round, some let into the wall, and one large cheval glass. The very fact of seeing myself so many times delighted

me, and I, vain little wretch that I was (yes, reader, even then), began to attitudinize in front of a glass. In the midst of this performance I heard the deep sounds of a big gong, which for the life of me I could not understand. At last the thought occurred it might be a summons to dinner; so I rushed to the magnificent hand-basin, and whilst washing my hands, I thought it was much too beautiful for such a purpose. I then dived into my rather shabby little bag, and fished out a comb and brush, proceeding, as the ladies say, "to tidy my hair." I then returned them to my bag, for I felt it would be a sacrilege to ornament such a grand dressing-table with two such mouldy toilet requisites as a middy's brush and comb after a long sea voyage.

Now, what to do next I did not know, so after a little time I quietly opened the door and peeped out, and seeing some ladies and gentlemen descending the stairs, I put on a bold front and quickly followed

them, and was soon in the drawing-room seated by Mrs. Birt's side, shortly after the gong again boomed forth. We then all rose, and to the amusement of the party, *I* (four feet six inches in my boots) was told off to take a tall slim young lady (five feet seven) into dinner, and the dot and go one pace caused much laughter to the guests, and no slight annoyance to me.

The arrangements at dinner, were to my young mind almost regal; lights, glass, lovely flowers, and silver glittered all around till I was perfectly lost in admiration of everything I saw; and in the midst of my dreamy abstraction a plate of soup was put before me, and being anxious to air my company manners, (which, by the way, one has little opportunity of doing in a midshipman's berth), I strictly adhered to my nursery idea of politeness, and would not attempt to begin till all had been helped at the table; this continued the whole of

dinner, consequently I lost half that was sent to me, by the energetic attentions of the servants waiting.

At last the young lady by my side told me I had better be quick or I should really get nothing to eat. Unfortunately this advice came rather late, for there was nothing now left but some ice pudding. Acting on her suggestion, I eagerly put a large piece in my mouth, which very nearly stifled me, and I felt as if every tooth in my head was being dragged out. Plunging my face into my serviette I gave way to spasmodic gulps, and I felt myself getting from red, to blue, and to my annoyance an old gentleman who sat opposite me shouted out,

“Holloa! youngster, what’s the matter? Did you find the ice-pudding hot?”

At which rude remark I only scowled.

My hostess observing there was something the matter, and on finding out the cause, sent a servant with a small glass of Curaçoa, which I drank, and after a short time re-

covered my composure, but felt I should like to have killed the old man, who, through his silly remark, caused so many to notice my discomfort.

Returning to the drawing-room, the evening was finished with music and a carpet dance, and when the time came to retire for the night, I felt much more at home than I ever hoped to in such a grand place.

A week had now passed, and certainly the most enjoyable one in my young life. Parties, dinners, pic-nics, rides and drives whirled the time away, and one night we all went to a grand ball, which I opened with a live princess. However, as all things on this earth must come to an end, so did my leave, and as the ship was ordered to sea, I was obliged to return on board. After regrets at parting on both sides, my hostess (who, by the way, was a widow) sent me to the pier in her carriage laden with presents of fruits, preserves, and flowers, which helped greatly to soothe my boyish grief at

parting with such nice kind people, and so much pleasure.

The following day we got under weigh, and as soon as the mail bag was brought on board we started.

I was leaning listlessly over the side, very busy with my own sad thoughts, and wishing to see the last of the dear old place I had passed such happy hours in, when I received a message from the captain that he wished to see me in his cabin, and on my entering he exclaimed with a smile,

“ I say, Mr. Bower, do you know you have been sailing under false colours ? ”

To which I replied with a puzzled air,

“ How do you mean, sir ? ”

“ Why,” said he, “ the hospitality that you’ve been receiving from the Birts was intended for Mr. Bowyer. His parents are really great friends of theirs, and in the hurry I told her your name. She must have mistaken it, hence the cause of your good fortune.”

“I’m sure I’m very sorry, sir,” I stammered; “but will you kindly tell me how you became aware of this?”

“When the mail arrived just now Mr. Bowyer received a letter from his mother, telling him all about the Birts, also enclosing a letter to Mrs. Birt that he was to take on shore himself; and now, you see,” he added with a smile, “the poor fellow is shut out of even coming in at the death, for we shall not see Naples again this voyage.”

“Indeed, I am very grieved about it, sir, still it was no fault of mine. What had I better do?”

“Go to Mr. Bowyer; tell him you regret being the unintentional cause of depriving him of the hospitality of his friends.”

Thanking the captain, I left the cabin, and seeking my mess-mate, who was still reading his mother’s letter, I placed my hand on his shoulder and said,

“I am very much annoyed, Bowyer, to find from the captain I have been doing you

out of your friend's kindness, but it was not my fault really. To which he answered roughly,

"Yes, it is your fault ; you ought to have told Mrs. Birt."

"Told her what ?" I said. "That I was not the son of my parents ? For the lady did not mention any names ; she merely said she knew my parents, which, of course, would have been very rude of me to contradict."

"It's all very well you trying to get out of it. A nice time you've had, while I have been stewed up on board all that blessed week, with scarcely an hour of pleasure."

Finding it was impossible to convince *any* of them that I did not know all about it, I gave up explaining any more.

Many times afterwards the captain has told the above story against me, particularly when entertaining guests, and always repeated his belief that I knew all the time it was a case of mistaken identity.

FRENCH POLITESSE;

OR,

MAGIC INFLUENCE OF THE CAT WITH NINE
TAILS.

—:0:—

IN a frigate I was on board of the captain allowed the French school-master to occupy the fore-cabin during school hours, contenting himself with the after-cabin, and as the door connecting the two was invariably kept open, silence and good behaviour on the part of the pupils was generally observed, except on one occasion, which I have only too good cause to remember, influencing as it did in a great measure the future actions of my life, and in the hope that the lesson I then received may prove a salutary caution to some of the rising generation, I will here relate it.

One morning Monsieur Barretti, the

French school-master, had occasion to reprove me for not going on with my lessons, the excuse being I could not find the books, &c. At last, losing all patience, he exclaimed,

“If you do not get your books at once, Monsieur Bower, I will speak to de captain, and ask him to give you de goût vith vhat you call 'em?—de puss-cat.”

“With what, M. Barretti?” replied I.

“Vhy, with dat ting, with de nine tails. You know very vell vhat I mean.”

This *plaisanterie-a-part* of the school-master's, to use a theatrical expression, “brought the house down,” and in rushed the captain from his after-cabin, demanding to know what the d —l was the meaning of all the noise, and in the midst of school hours too, as if a second Bedlam had broken loose, &c. On which M. Barretti replied,

“Oh, please, sir, it's M. Bower.”

“What!” exclaimed the captain, interrupting him, “that M. Bower again. I'll

soon put a stop to this ;” and without listening to another word added, “ Please ring the bell,” and on the sentry answering the summons he was ordered to send the boatswain immediately. Meanwhile a dead silence prevailed, broken only by the school-master explaining more fully to the captain the circumstance attending the uproar, &c. On the boatswain being announced, the captain directed him to bring one of his mates, a cat, and some lashings. Then pulling out his watch and turning to me said,

“ Mr. Bower, it now wants five minutes to the half-hour ; if you are not at your lessons, books and all, by the half-hour may I be d——d if I don’t flog you.” He then walked into the after-cabin.

I need not add the words were scarcely spoken ere I was out of sight and back again before a minute had elapsed. But smart as I was, I staggered on beholding the boatswain and his mate, who had

already taken up their positions each side of a gun, one with the cat, the other with lashings, ready for immediate use.

I must own if ever a thrill ran through my veins it was then, and I trust never to experience the feeling again, and shall always look back with pleasure to the beneficial results of that day, and the effect it had on my actions in after-life. The half-hour had barely struck, when the captain again made his appearance, and in answer to his inquiries of M. Barretti, was told that I had returned almost immediately and was partly through my first lesson, on which the captain, addressing the boatswain, said, "We shall not require your services this time, Mr. Bolt; you may go." Then turning to me said, "You have had a very narrow escape, Mr. Bower, so take warning; you will not get off so easy next time." He then returned to his after-cabin. It was then, and not till then, that I gave a long deep sigh, and began to breathe freely

once more. After this experiment, oh ! ye gods ! talk about doing away with the lash, never, I hope.

It is the fear of the lash, that is the mainstay of the discipline of the navy. Remember it is not the good men, whose morals we are now studying, but those of the bad characters, and I maintain, that its presence on board is Jack's best friend. And why ? Simply, because he knows what is ready in store for him should he transgress, and now, ninety-nine times out of a hundred, he hesitates, draws back, whereas in the absence of the cat, hesitation would not trouble him much, if at all, for what do bad characters care about imprisonment and minor punishments ? They rather court them than otherwise, to get off work, &c., independent of which the ship, instead of being a man-of-war, would become a floating prison.

We have at times severe cases to deal with (odd if we had not !) considering the

hundreds of men we are daily in contact with, and unless furnished with severe and immediate remedies to meet them, it is impossible that discipline, or anything approaching it, could be maintained.

In former times the use and abuse of the cat was a disgrace to the navy, but now, under its present guarded and strict supervision, it might safely not only be countenanced, but welcomed ; and as nothing in this world is perfect, let us, of two evils, choose the least.

I remember some years ago a circular was issued by the Admiralty prohibiting the punishment of boys with the cane. What was the result ? The captains and other officers could do nothing with them ; they were always under punishment, not only requiring extra sentries, &c., to be posted, but extra hands to see the various sentences carried out. Even then they gave constant trouble and annoyance.

At the expiration of six months' trial (I

think it was) the Admiralty were only too glad to rescind the order, owing to the endless complaints made of the boys' conduct by every ship in commission.

Ask the good seamen and petty officers their opinion of the presence of the cat, and they will tell you that discipline would be a bug-bear without it.

If the juvenile branches of the service give so much trouble when the requisite means are wanting to keep them in order, may I ask what may we expect from the elder ones ?

To conclude, rely upon it, the cat, like "the sword of Damocles," will strike terror into none *but those that deserve it.*

THE
SCAVENGERS OF CONSTANTINOPLE.

—:0:—

FEW people but must have heard of the dogs at Constantinople, if they have not seen them. Like the kites in India, they become the scavengers of certain localities, and, strange to relate, generation after generation of dogs, keep to one quarter of the town, and regularly consume all the refuse of a certain number of houses, roads, &c., and woe betide any of the rest of their species if they dare make a meal out of their rightful territory. Such a thing does happen sometimes, which generally ends in a free fight, much to the annoyance and alarm of the passers-by; for it is no joke to be surrounded by about twenty great big half-starved dogs, snapping and snarling at each other. As a rule they do not interfere

with people, but, unfortunately for me, some of them broke through that rule to my cost.

On one occasion I landed at Constantinople from H.M.S. ——— with despatches for the captain, who was staying at the Embassy, and my way was through a churchyard. I had scarcely entered the gate before I saw five or six great brown dogs fighting, and, seeing me approach, they all made a rush where I was. At first I had no idea they really meant mischief, but when one half-starved looking wretch, with eyes like danger signals on a railway and a jaw like an alligator, made a snap at my leg, accompanying this *gentle* attention with a low meaning growl, I must own I got a scare, and tried to bolt; but it was “no go,” the whole box and die of them came at me, and down I went, and gave myself up for lost, having fully made up my mind to be, as the Yankees say, “chawed up.”

I called lustily for help, to a Turkish soldier, who was passing, but to my horror, he never attempted to come near, but only scowled, making use of some term in his own language, which no doubt meant a curse, and a hope, that the dogs would eat up the "young infidel."

But luckily, a plucky old woman, behaved much better, than the soldier Turk, with his side-arms, for she, on hearing my cries for help, rushed out of a small house near, and, brandishing with great vigour a thick besom, soon put my enemies to flight, and they bolted in all directions. The good old soul then helped me up, and after brushing my cap, and clothes, with her apron, begged me to hurry on out of the way of the dogs, as they were more vicious, than usual that morning.

After many thanks, and presenting her with all the spare cash I had, (which was spare, indeed, for the amount of a midshipman's loose coin, is not great at any time)

I walked on, hoping I was more frightened than hurt.

On arriving at the Embassy, I was received by the captain, who remarked, as I handed him the despatches, that I was very pale, then suddenly, with a look of surprise, he exclaimed,

“Why! what have you been doing, Mr. Bower? there is blood running down your leg over your boot,” and, on looking, I perceived it, and must own began to be very frightened, and at once told him all that had occurred. He immediately rang the bell and sent for the Embassy doctor, who took me to his room, and, on examination, found no less than five wounds on my legs, caused by the dogs’ teeth, which he at once cauterized freely, and the pain was really worse to bear, than that caused by the bite of the dogs. I was then sent down to the boat in one of the ambassadors’ carriages, with a note to the doctor, who, on reading it, ordered me at once to a cot, and I was

under his care for three weeks. At one time he proposed to go on shore with me, when I was better, and, by the help of the old woman, hunt up the dogs, that had bitten me so severely, then shoot them. The difficulty of finding them would not have been great, for, as I said before, they always kept to their own quarters. His great reason for wishing to kill them, was in the event of any of them going mad, *I* might do the same, an idea, that certainly was *not* soothing to my mind. However, all passed off well, I am thankful to say, and, as it is many, many years ago, since it occurred, I am not the least afraid of any bad result now, still, I have the marks of their horrid teeth, to this day.

One of our lieutenants, also had an adventure with two of these vagabond dogs, but not so tragic as mine, in fact it was rather amusing than otherwise.

Landing one morning for a walk, and passing a baker's shop on his way, he

remarked two half-starved looking dogs, anxiously watching the rolls in the window, and, being of a generous nature, he went in and purchased one for each of them, then proceeded on his way.

The next day, on passing the shop about the same hour, he saw, to his amusement, the two dogs, perched one on either side of the door, and, with a low whine of recognition, they approached him, and began to beg, when he again presented them with a roll each. This occurred, on and off, for some days, and if by chance he went out of the town in another direction, the two dogs would disappear from their post. This was managed by one of them watching at the end of the street, and as soon as he saw the lieutenant was going another way, he would scamper back to his friend at the baker's shop, and they would then both disappear, evidently thinking it was no good waiting that day. However, on one occasion he nearly came to grief, through his generosity.

He landed as usual, and was on his way for his walk past the baker's, but before he arrived at the door he met two ladies, one of whom he greatly admired ; and in his joy at the chance of a chat, and perhaps a stroll with her, he forgot all about his canine pensioners, who were waiting at their usual post ; as long as the party still continued talking, the two dogs remained perfectly quiet, but when they attempted to move on, their benefactor being evidently perfectly oblivious to their existence, it was too much for the poor hungry creatures ; simultaneously they made a rush past the ladies, nearly knocking them down ; then springing upon the officer on either side, they almost toppled him over, leaving the marks of their great black muddy paws on his white waistcoat and trousers, and it was with great difficulty he could beat them off.

On explaining to his fair friends the cause of this inopportune attention on the part of the dogs, they expressed only pity for the

poor things, and thought it very pretty of them to remind him,

He had not paid the toll,
By giving them each a roll.

He did not, however, view it in the same light, for on leaving the ladies (which he was obliged to do, to return to the ship and change his clothes) he went back, and finding the dogs still near the shop (himself not in the best of humours), instead of giving them the accustomed roll, he gave them a sound thrashing with his stick—thus they both caught it pretty hot, not so much for begging, as for spoiling his appearance with the smudging of their dirty paws, thereby rendering it impossible for him to escort the ladies to their home, which was a great disappointment.

MORAL.

Do not beg inopportune,
Or you may lose a friend too soon.

RETURN OF THE MISSING SHEEP (LAMB).

—:0:—

Soon after the Bavarian Otho became King of Greece, his Majesty paid a visit to his different provinces, including Sparta, and its surrounding districts. The frigate I was then on board of, was ordered to Marathon, a small town situated in a bay of that name, to embark his Majesty on his return, and convey him to the capital. The captain and officers not wishing to lose an opportunity of seeing a place so renowned in history, as Sparta, (which was only about twenty miles inland) decided on arriving before the time fixed for the embarkation of the king. Consequently, on reaching Marathon, the Greek pilot was sent on shore to engage horses for the party (fifteen in number) to start the next morning, as the only mode of travelling in this rough,

wild country, was by bridle paths, and some of them almost impassable, from the big boulders.

Towards evening, the pilot returned, having succeeded in engaging a sufficient number of beasts—I cannot desecrate the name, of some of the noblest animals on earth, by calling them horses; however, it was the best he could get, and after impressing upon us all, to take a blanket, or thick rug, by which means we may render riding on the wooden pack-saddle (the only one used in Marathon) bearable for any distance, he left the ship, promising to meet us the next morning, at the rendezvous arranged.

The morning broke fine, but rather cloudy, and we were all very anxious to see something of that once fine hardy race of men, but now so fallen.

On landing, we were soon at the starting-place, and after padding the wooden saddles, with our blankets, and rugs, we mounted,

and right glad we were, that our jaded cavalcade of old screws could not be seen by any of our English friends, for a more dirty, bony lot of half-fed nags, could not be imagined. One old grey, about seventeen hands, with legs as stiff as clothes-props, was told off for me, and by dint of very hard work, and banging him with a thick stick, I managed to keep just in the rear of the party, and I do not know really which was the hardest, his fearful old bones, or my stick, and I feel convinced he hadn't the least feeling left in him, and one might as well have ridden an old cow; still, the rest of the party were not much better off. After a tedious ride through narrow bridle-paths, and now and then passing small and squalid-looking cottages inhabited by the dirtiest, and most rough, lawless men, each armed to the teeth, the sight of whom gave one a cold shiver, at the very thought of what deadly affair might happen, if by any chance, some poor wretch was left to their mercy. We

sighted Sparta, and at different parts of the journey we met many of these men lounging about listlessly, their costumes almost picturesque, notwithstanding their filthy state.

At last Sparta was reached without any adventure worth describing. All the people were making great preparations for the reception of their king, and it was with great difficulty we could get any food, and a shake-down for the night; and, oh! ye gods! what a shelter, when we did succeed! We were under cover, and that is as much as I can say. The place allotted for the junior members of the party, (one of which I made) was a kind of large loose box, with two small iron gratings at the top, to allow a little fresh air to struggle in, the floor was taken possession of, by countless broods of chicken, and old cackling hens, at the sight of which, we all began to grumble, but finding it was useless to complain, there being no other place of shelter available, but a

disused cow-shed, we spread our blankets, and rugs; and notwithstanding the feathered tribe making nests of our feet, for warmth, and the millions of fleas, that made the night hideous with their voracious appetites, we slept.

But in the morning, the waking scene was most ludicrous—one fellow had his eyes completely closed up, another had his face and hands covered with little red bumps, evidently caused by the dainty meals that had been partaken off them by a broader and more lethargic animal than the lively flea—but there was no time for complaining, it was a case of grin and bear all, for we had to start on an exploring expedition immediately after breakfast.

Rushing into a kind of barn, with a deal table in the centre, and a few old empty boxes to sit on, we ravenously devoured a very good (though roughly served) meal, in which we were joined by the rest of our party; soon after we set out for sight-seeing,

and were well repaid for the time and trouble. A more interesting place than Sparta cannot be imagined; and the fact of its being the birthplace of the "Spartan Boy"—who, while denying the possession of the fox, suffered it, hidden under his clothes, to gnaw his very entrails out—adds much to its interest.

The city is rather irregularly built, and consists of five different quarters. The market-place is very quaint, and near it is a celebrated colonnade, built from the spoils taken from the Persians. The traits of the Spartan character were severity, resolution, and perseverance, but they were crafty and faithless. They try the strength of their new-born infants by placing them in a bath of wine, thinking that the effect on sickly children would produce convulsions, on healthy ones, add to their strength.

The Spartan (if we can trust Homer) brought up his children to steal; he never allowed them half food enough to eat, and

when they were hungry, they were obliged to steal, and, if discovered, they were not punished for the theft, but for the awkwardness of being found out.

Having made the most of the time at our disposal, and seeing all that was of interest, the following day we mounted our scraggy nags, and, taking a farewell of the Consul and a few friends, we started on our homeward route. After riding a short distance into the country, the horse ridden by the first lieutenant cast a shoe. After some difficulty, we managed to find a man at a wayside inn who undertook to nail it on, an affair that caused some delay; so the captain arranged that half the party should proceed at a slow pace, that the others might overtake them as soon as the shoe was on, as it was not considered safe to travel in small numbers, in this lawless part of the country.

I, was one of the party in advance, and all went well, till we came to two cross-

roads, where we halted for a consultation, as to what was the best thing to do, fearing, if we went on, the other half of our party might take the wrong turning, and lose their way back to the ship, the guide being with us. It was then proposed that I should wait for them, which accordingly I did, being cautioned particularly, which road to follow.

Remaining alone, some time after the last faint echoes of their horses' feet had died away, I began to feel very sad at heart. Not a sound of a living creature to be heard, not even the chirp of a bird, to break the monotony of my dreary solitude, and with a feeling gradually stealing over me, that I was the sole inhabitant of this world, I felt inclined to shout; anything, to break the silence. When suddenly my horse (which till this moment had remained perfectly still) turned sharply round, and bolted right across the road, which performance was caused, by some dark brown hairy

animal, rushing from one side of the hedge to the other, under his very nose. In the suddenness of the bolt, I had great difficulty in keeping my seat, and as for pulling him up, that was impossible, having only a rope halter for a bridle, and that not even in his mouth, and the little "go" that was in the brute, was only stubbornness now, so on we went, over the rough ground, and my discomfort was more than I can describe, mentally, and bodily, for the woodeny pace of my "nag" was jolting the very life out of me, and it was with great difficulty I kept my seat at all; in fact, at one time I was obliged to hold on, by placing my arms round his scraggy neck. Happily for me, he soon became exhausted, and suddenly stopped dead, which I immediately took advantage of, and dismounting, placed the halter in his mouth, hoping by that means to be able to guide him a little better. Now came the question, which way to go? I knew we must be somewhere in the

vicinity of Sparta, so I determined to make for that town again, and there being some men in the road I shouted out "Sparta," and they pointed me out the direction, and on I went, in wild despair, as fast as my bony nag would carry me, and eventually found my way back to my old quarters, poultry, and all.

Having seen the old horse put up, I posted off to the Consul, who was surprised to see me back again, so soon, and after relating my unfortunate adventure, I sought his advice, as to what I had better do. After listening gravely, he told me I ought to consider myself very fortunate in getting back all right, for the country round was infested with a set of robbers, and lawless men of the worst description. He then informed me, to my great joy, the "Aga" (Governor) of Marathon was returning to his post, from this place, the following day, to be ready to receive the King, and that if I would be at the consulate, the next morning

after breakfast, he would make arrangements for me to return in the Governor's suite.

Thanking him very much, I went back to my old quarters, and right glad was I to get anywhere safely for the night. Next morning, after a *not* too elaborate toilet, I turned up at the Consul's, and was introduced to the Governor and his secretary, both Greeks, neither of whom could speak a word of English. The secretary, happily, spoke a little French, so we managed to get up a small conversation, in the course of which, he told me we should be obliged to stay a night at a village not far from the town of Marathon, where the Governor had some business to transact. This vexed me very much at first, for I was anxious to get back to my messmates, as I knew they would be very much distressed at my strange absence ; and another thing, the dirt and fleas were worrying me to death, and the idea of being compelled to pass

another night swarmed over by vermin, with no chance of a change of clothes in the morning, was almost unbearable.

After again bidding adieu to the Consul, and thanking him for getting me attached to the escort, we started, and whilst I was jogging safely along, my messmates were in the greatest consternation at my absence. It appears they all reached the ship safely on the evening of the day they left Sparta, the second party having been shown a short cut by the man who shod the horse; they never came near the road where I was posted, so I might have remained there till doomsday.

When dinner was announced, they missed me from amongst their number, and never for a moment fancying I was not on board, sent the steward to look for me, when lo! and behold no "Mr. Bower" was to be found; my absence was immediately reported to the captain, who, being most anxious, ordered a boat to be sent on

shore, and every enquiry to be made to try and find out something about me, but the men returned, unfortunately without any success. The next morning parties were sent in different directions, with natives of the place, who knew well the country I had to pass, but all to no purpose. I could not be found, and the lawless state of the country made them imagine all sorts of horrors. In the meantime I was passing the dreary time away in a little village quite out of the main road, having arrived at the end of the day's journey. The houses or huts of this village were of mud, with here and there a stone introduced to add to their strength. Inside one of these was a square apartment, formed by the four mud walls, in which the whole family lived, including fowls and dogs, all pigging it out together. The furniture consisted of a few thick rugs, which answered the purpose of tables, chairs, and beds. In one corner of the room there were some

brown earthen-ware plates, bowls, and dishes, &c.

After a short time the Governor, accompanied by the head man of the village, inspected several of these huts, and selecting one of the best (of which the above is a fair description) to my astonishment made all the inmates turn out bag and baggage for the night, and we took possession, putting the Governor's rugs and other luggage in their place. Very soon after, we were all seated *a la* Turk on our rugs (which, to say the least of it, were lively); dinner was then served, consisting of some strange-looking, mashed-up mess of potatoes and meat, served in a brown pan, with bread nearly black; then came hard-boiled eggs and rice, and some wine of the country, which had a strong flavour of resin. After this most indigestible and comfortless meal we rolled ourselves in our rugs, and lay down on the mud floor; thus coiled up I soon fell into a deep sleep, which lasted the

whole night. It would have been better for me had my sleep not been so deep, for when I awoke in the morning my face was literally eaten all over by my small bed-fellows, and I arose, vowing in the strongest language I would never put my foot into such a dirty hole again. After taking a cup of coffee, we mounted our horses and started for Marathon, and riding as far as the bend of a road, we caught the first glimpse of the sea, and in the distance the dear old ship, laying at anchor, off the town. My heart now was full of joy and thankfulness at the thought of being so soon on board, and able to get a warm bath, and change my now almost filthy garments, a luxury I should think the Greek lower orders never dream of indulging in, judging by their greasy, slimy appearance.

Our road now lay along the beach, and as we approached the ship, glasses were levelled at our party, and on perceiving me,

“the lost sheep,” amongst them, a boat was immediately manned, and sent on shore, in which were two of my messmates, who were anxious to be the first to congratulate me on my safe return.

Thanking my travelling companions, I wished them good-bye. I then sent my old bony grey by one of the men to its lawful owner, and, getting into the boat, was soon alongside, and on the deck of my old ship once more, where I met with a reception from the captain and officers which I shall never forget; while the ship’s company, who were assembled on deck, received and welcomed the “lost sheep” with a hearty cheer.

The following day we embarked the king and suite, and left for Athens.

ESCAPING THE FIRST WATCH.

—:0:—

WE were beating up the Gulf of Napoli against a head wind, the night being dark and very cold. I was already rigged for the first watch in thick pilot coat and comforter, and longing for a whiff of tobacco to assist in keeping the cold out, I popped into the lee main chains to get a few "draws," when I heard sounds of loud talking through the midshipman's berth; listening, I found the fellows were abusing the captain like hot-shot. Just as I was revolving in my mind how I could let them know their voices could be heard on deck, I looked up at the sound of a footstep, and, to my horror, I saw the captain standing in the gangway, which was just over the scuttle, while the conversation was going on more distinctly than ever. Finding there was no time to be lost, if I wished to save my messmates,

I pitched away my cigar, and began to lower myself down by the chain-plates, hoping by that means to reach the scuttle, and warn them of the captain's close proximity, but it was unfortunately too low for me to reach, except by hanging on by my hands to the scuttle ; nothing daunted, I made the attempt, and had succeeded in catching hold, when, to my dismay, the frigate gave a lurch, sending the scuttle to with a bang, jamming my fingers so horribly that I was obliged to let go, and overboard I went. When the splash was heard, the soul-stirring cry of " a man overboard " echoed from one end of the ship to the other ; in an incredibly short time, all was hurry and scurry on deck, officers and men vieing with each other in doing what was for the best, life-buoys let go, boats lowered, &c.

The ship was immediately " hove about," and had, consequently, little or no way on ; and when I arose to the surface a second time I heard voices exclaiming, " Here he

is! Quick, quick; a rope!" And with energetic measures a coil was thrown to me, the best part of which alighted on my head with such stunning effect, that it sent me down a third time. Shortly afterwards, I again came to the surface, but with very confused thoughts. I remember feeling a pain in my back, caused by one of the men dragging me across the gunwale of the boat, and hearing the faint echo of a voice calling out, to those on board, "All right, sir; he's safe. We have got him." Then all was chaos.

On recovering my senses, I found myself in the captain's cabin, surrounded by the doctor and his attendants, busily employed in their various vocations, consisting of a good rubbing, warm baths, &c., not forgetting a bountiful supply of hot brandy and water, which soon had the effect of causing me to feel almost myself again.

Then came the thought of how I could explain to the captain, why I was in the

main chains (which I should most assuredly have to do). The doctor, finding by this time I was nearly all right, kindly attended me to my hammock, and gave me a draught to take directly I got into bed, after which, I am glad to say, I slept like a top, and awoke the next morning, none the worse for my unlucky adventure, and truly thankful for the providential escape of the previous night.

About ten o'clock a.m., I was sent for to the captain's cabin. Pulling myself together, I made up my mind to tell a white fib and stick to it, rather than betray my mess-mates; so to his inquiries, how I came to fall overboard, I replied, I went into the main chains to smoke, and hearing him approach, I tried to get quickly to the deck again, when the ship gave a lurch, and overboard I went.

After admonishing me severely for my carelessness and disobedience of orders, he dismissed me. Whether he believed my

version of the affair I know not, but I had saved my messmates, and that was all I cared about.

Though, to give you an idea of the ingratitude of some people, one of them actually said, it was all gammon (though he was one who had been abusing the captain in the berth at the very time), for that, being a good swimmer, I did it to escape the first watch.

Apropos of "a man overboard," I shall never forget a sad affair which occurred many years after, during the time I was in command of Her Majesty's yacht, "Osborne," when steaming up the Sandö Channel, for Stockholm, with H.R.H. the Prince of Wales on board. On our approaching the vicinity of the town, it was reported to me, that Prince Oscar of Sweden, with his flag flying, was nearing us in his steam yacht. Leaving the deck in charge of the officer of the watch, I slipped below to put on dress-coat and epau-

lettes, in order to receive H.R.H., when I was surprised to find the engines suddenly stopped, and to hear overhead a regular stampede and shouting of men's voices, which I thought most unaccountable. Rushing on deck to ascertain the cause, I was informed that a quarter-master had fallen overboard, and looking over the stern saw the poor fellow struggling in the water, some distance off: although the sea was as smooth as glass, he sank before a boat could reach him, and was never seen again—the event casting a deep gloom over all on board. He was a steady, well-conducted man (Wells by name), and a great favourite.

I found afterwards the accident was caused by the poor fellow losing his foothold while engaged in adjusting the sideropes, and not being able to swim, all efforts to save him proved ineffectual.

Well may it be said, "that in the midst of life, we are in death."

**FLOURY TURN OUT.—NIBBLING ON
THE BIGHT.—SAVED BY A BUTTON.**

—:O:—

WHEN I first entered the service most large ships had two midshipmen's berths, the senior and junior; the latter, of course, I joined: we mustered about eighteen, including two senior members (an old mate and a captain's clerk), who were answerable to a certain extent for the good behaviour of us youngsters; of course, they took the posts of honour, and carved the different joints, made tea, and generally drank all the strongest. Each day, at dinner, our patience was sorely tried, from their passing one to the other the "tit-bits," as the two old cormorants termed the best slices out of the joints, wings and breasts of fowls, &c. Once a week we were allowed wine

when began the expense of which was shared by the whole mess. Whether present or not, when the bottles had been passed round once, the old mate would stick a fork in the beam, a signal for us youngsters to clear out, and out we had to go. Then the two would draw their chairs together, sit down, and consume all the wine left, which was intended for the consumption of the mess—the effect of which invariably sent them both into a swinish sleep, and it was with great difficulty they could be roused to attend evening quarters.

One day, being annoyed more than usual by their greedy selfishness, some of us determined to play a small practical joke on one of them. Accordingly, we procured a paper bag of flour, and tied it slightly round the opening with a piece of string, leaving one end long enough to hang some distance from the bag; we then secured the top part to a hat peg in the beam, just over the chair where the old mate sat, placing a uniform

cap over it; our preparations were then complete, and we left the rest to fate.

In a short time tea was announced, and we all assembled, taking our respective seats, the old mate being the last, looking half asleep, and certainly not in the best of tempers. The heat was intense; a midshipman's berth on the lower deck of a frigate is not the coolest, or most odorous place at the best of times, and we were then in the height of a Mediterranean summer, with only two small scuttles to let in air and ventilate the berth. Two large lamps were burning night and day, and at tea a huge urn was hissing on the table. To say we were perspiring, would be a mild term to express the state of parboil we were then in, increased, no doubt, by the suppressed laughter at our own practical joke.

We had commenced tea, when suddenly the old mate, who was in the act of pouring out a cup for himself, banged down the teapot, and exclaimed—

“D——n the flies!” at the same time hitting himself a smart smack on the head, evidently taking the tickling of the string on his old bald pate for a fly: it was with great difficulty we youngsters could refrain from bursting into a peal of laughter; as it was, one fellow nearly choked himself with a bit of biscuit, in his endeavour to stop a laugh; and we took advantage of his spluttering and coughing to have a good roar, and made believe it was at *his* discomforts we were all so highly amused, at which the two old fellows joined heartily, the mate telling him he should not be such a hungry pig, then he wouldn’t choke over his food.

After administering this mild rebuke, he leaned back in his chair, and again the piece of string tickled the side of his face and head, which was now in one bath of perspiration, his old shining pate and slight fringe of hair, looking as if he had just come out of the sea. Glancing up, he

spied the string, and, turning to his friend, said—

“Why, Jock, it is this d——d bit of string that’s bothering me, not the flies after all” ; and, again looking up, he gave a spiteful tug at the offending string, when open came the bag, and down came the flour over his unctuous head, face, and shoulders.

Then the scene of confusion was indescribable. We youngsters doubled up in every conceivable position, literally shrieking with laughter ; tea was upset, biscuits flew about in all directions ; old Jock (the captain’s clerk) tried to soothe his friend, and, with his hot, greasy hands, endeavoured to rub away the flour—thus converting it into a kind of batter. In this state, the mate rushed to his cabin for a stick, which was the signal for a regular stampede ; up the ladder we all tumbled, one after the other, closely followed by the old mate, swearing like mad, and declaring he would kill us all ; however, just as he placed his

foot on the deck, he was met by the officer of the watch, who said, in an angry tone—

“What do you mean, Mr. —, by this most unseemly conduct? You are turning the ship into a perfect Babel.” To which the old fellow replied—

“I’ve been made a fool of, sir, by those youngsters, and if I get hold of them I will slay the lot.” He then tried to rush past the officer, who at once perceived he was not only under the influence of rage, at our joke, but of drink also; and immediately ordered him to his cabin, and to consider himself under arrest. The officer then told us to go below, adding that the whole affair would be investigated by the captain on the following day.

Next morning we were summoned into the captain’s presence, who, after he had heard of the repeated acts of meanness and greed, on the part of the mate, which, to a certain extent, palliated our practical joke,

simply reprimanded us, but threatened that, if anything of the kind occurred again, we should be punished most severely. I am sorry to say the poor old mate did not get off so well, not on account of his rage and violent temper, but because he was intoxicated—a circumstance which we youngsters had not particularly remarked, but which was at once detected by the officer of the watch. Drunkenness being a very serious offence on board ship, the old mate's condition was reported to the captain, who, finding on inquiry it was not the first time he had been seen in that state, gave him the option of leaving the ship, or being tried by court-martial.

Knowing full well he would not have a leg to stand upon in the latter case, the mate chose the former, and left the ship, but not before he had forgiven us youngsters, and we parted very good friends with the old fellow after all.

A short time after the adventures described in my last, I was myself the victim of a practical joke. A young mate, who joined in the place of the old fellow that left, was, without exception, the most inveterate tease I ever met, in or out of the service, often carrying his jokes much too far ;—indeed, at times they were positively brutal, and we youngsters suffered more or less from them. The one I am now going to relate, he carried out most dexterously on two of us, a middy called Green and myself, thereby doubling his joke.

We had all retired to rest in our hammocks, the clews of the different rows interlocking each other ; previously to our turning in, the mate had amused himself by unreeving the lanyards of the foot clews, and making them fast on the bight, so that a smart pull would release them of their hold, and down would come the hammocks. After he found we had turned in, he came to my side, and whispered—

"I say, Bower, I want you to help me in a good joke."

"All right," I replied, in a whisper, of course nothing loth to help in sending one of my messmates flying out of his hammock—this occurring to me at once as being the joke intended; it was soon confirmed, by his handing me the lanyard of Green's foot clew, already secured on the bight, with instructions to cover over my head and keep perfectly still till I heard him whistle, then give a sharp pull, and let go, when down would come Green, hammock and all. Accordingly, I remained perfectly quiet, chuckling with delight at the prospect of the fun. Shortly after, I heard the signal, and after giving a sharp tug at the lanyard, let it go suddenly, and was about to peep at the result when, to my disgust, down I came bang on the deck, face to face with Green; a more stupid pair of fools than we appeared could scarcely be conceived, each smarting, not only from the con-

cussion, but from the reflection that we had both been the victims of the mate's practical joking; to add to our annoyance, we could hear his subdued laughter on the ladder, where, with some of his companions, he was enjoying the joke immensely. The rage we were both in rendered us almost speechless, so we thought the best thing to do was to trice up our hammocks again, and turn in, taking care this time to see well to the bight.

I found out afterwards that as soon as the mate saw my head well covered, he went to the side of Green's hammock, and gave him exactly the same instructions as he had given me, handing him at the same time the end of *my* lanyard; as the one whistle was to answer for the two, both tugs were given simultaneously, the result being as above-stated, down we came. Next morning at breakfast we were objects of much attention; the description of the joke was given with great merriment by our tor-

mentor, much to the annoyance of Green, who appeared to take the affair sadly to heart, and called the mate a big bully. As for myself, I soon forgot all about it, but Green being of a hasty temper, and strong will, could not brook the mate's teasy bullying.

On another occasion Green had a very nice cake sent him ; the mate seeing it on the table, asked to whom it belonged, and being told it was Green's (who he evidently disliked very much), he stuffed it into one of his old greasy uniform caps, and laughing, said to him—

“You can't eat that cake now, so there will be all the more for me.”

Whereupon Green seized the cap, cake and all, and pitched it through the scuttle overboard ; with a howl of rage, the mate seized hold of him (being a big burly fellow it was no effort, for the youngster was small and slight) and pushed him into a large

empty hamper, the lid of which he closed and sat upon—and, had it not been for the interference of his mess-mates, he must have suffocated the poor lad. After recovering himself, Green sat down, looking very moody and revengeful. A short time after, dinner was served, while the mate was standing with his back to the table, Green, without a word of warning, rushed across the berth, seized a large carving-knife, and stabbed the mate in the back, exclaiming—

“This will rid the world of a cowardly tyrant.”

At this we all rushed up and tried to get the knife out of Green's hand. The mate, whom we expected would have fallen dead at our feet, turned round, and with a sickly grin, said—

“Halloa ! Green, what were you trying to do ?—brush a fly off my jacket, eh ?”

And to our surprise we found that he was not stabbed after all, the point of the knife

having fortunately struck in the middle of a metal brace-button, causing nothing more serious than a sharp blow, thus saving the mate's life, and poor Green from being a murderer.

The fracas had made such a commotion through the ship that the whole affair had to be reported to the captain. Accordingly the next morning we were all assembled before him; after fully investigating the case he said to the mate, who was now looking terribly frightened—

“ Mr. —, after a most searching inquiry, I cannot help saying that I think you are to blame for the whole affair; instead of setting the young members of your mess a good example, and by this means gaining their respect and trust, you have carried on a system of low, ungentlemanly, and at times cruel, practical joking, thereby rendering the lives of those of refined and sensitive feelings almost unbearable. Such conduct is very reprehensible anywhere, but much

more so on board a man-of-war, where discipline and obedience are most essential for order and respect, without which a ship would become a floating Hades; if the senior officers set a bad example to the juniors, how can they expect to be obeyed or respected? To show my utter abhorrence of your cruel and ungentlemanly conduct, I shall order your leave to be stopped for three months, and if I hear of one single act of bullying again on your part I will, without the slightest hesitation, take means to have you turned out of the ship."

After dismissing the mate, who did not say a word in defence, he turned to Green and said—

"I am deeply grieved to see you in this position, as, although you had great provocation, I cannot admit you were justified in giving way to such extreme violence; had it not been for a merciful Providence Mr. — would now be lying dead, hurried unprepared into the presence of his Maker, and you would be sent away to a prison to

be tried for your life. Think of the misery you might have brought on so many by giving way to such violent tempers ; think, of the time to come, when you would have to stand face to face with, and be judged by an all-powerful and just God."

Seeing that Green was evidently much distressed, and sobbing fit to break his heart, the captain kindly added—

"As I see you are truly penitent and regretful of the past, I will not report you to the admiral ; I hope you will show, by your future conduct, you are worthy of the clemency I have shown. I also trust that this providential escape, will act as a blessing to you through life."

Thanking the captain fervently, poor Green left the cabin sobbing bitterly ; as we followed him, there was not one of us but felt how kind and good the captain had been.

Truly "out of evil comes good," for the affair put a stop to the mate's bullying, and we were always afterwards a happy and comfortable ship.

THE SPOTLESS THIEF.

—:0:—

A VERY unpleasant affair, to say the least of it, occurred in the midshipmen's berth of which I was a member, from the fact that petty thefts were committed daily—all of us, at different times, losing small sums of money, trinkets, etc. Suspicion fell on one of the youngsters, but not sufficiently to condemn him; a circumstance at length occurred which authorised the captain in carrying out the following stratagem, which proved successful, and confirmed our surmises regarding the suspected one.

As before stated, it being one of the youngsters that was suspected, the captain chose six of us, wherewith to carry out his idea; he having previously ordered his steward to bring on board from the market a live chanticleer, and put it into his side-cabin.

I must here explain that the captain's fore-cabin had a part of the starboard side partitioned off as a sleeping berth, having free communication from the main-deck through to the after-cabin, without interfering with the main fore-cabin. It was in this sleeping berth that master chanticleer was put; to fulfil its destined object, it was secretly slaughtered, and the body made to stand on a table, with the assistance of stout wires. It was then blackened over with charcoal, whilst the cabin was so darkened that the bird was only just discernible.

All being arranged the captain went outside on the main-deck accompanied by the first lieutenant, who alone was in the detective secret, and sending for the six youngsters, including the suspected one, he addressed them as follows :—

“ Young gentlemen, I am very sorry to hear that many cases of theft (I can call it by no other name) have taken place in the gun-room, and that suspicion falls on a

certain individual ; but as I have not yet been able to collect sufficient proof to bring the case thoroughly home to him, I have hit upon an expedient which will doubtless bring the real culprit to light, and rid the ship of a *pest*."

He then explained that each of us had to pass through the side-door into the after-cabin, that in doing so we should see an ancient chanticleer on the table, which we were to stroke down the back twice with our right hand, and that we had then to pass on through the opposite door into the after-cabin ; he also gave us distinctly to understand that immediately the real thief touched the bird, it would commence crowing. Then informing the first lieutenant he should ring the bell when ready, left, to take up his position on the opposite side of the door in his after-cabin, ready to receive and examine the youngsters as they passed through.

The latter proceeding we thought incom-

prehensible, particularly those who had to stand the test of their future prospects in life being marred, or made, by the will and caprice of an old chanticleer.

Presently tinkle went the bell, and the first youngster on the list entered by the side-door, amid breathless silence; on arriving at the opposite door, he was addressed by the captain, who requested to see the palm of his right hand, and finding it marked well with charcoal, said, "That will do; you may sit down." Tinkle, tinkle, again went the bell, when four others followed in succession; yet, to the astonishment of everyone (the captain and the first lieutenant excepted), there was no crowing, although every individual who had as yet passed through had satisfactorily proved by his charcoaled palm, that he had stroked the bird.

The last on the list (in reality the suspected one) was now passing the bird, and all were waiting the result in breathless

anxiety, when he emerged from the door of the darkened cabin; looking ghastly pale, on being asked to show the palm of his right hand it was, as everyone expected, without a trace of charcoal, proving that he had not touched the bird, being fearful of its crowing, and exposing what he knew in his own conscience to be the case—that *he himself* was the thief. Finding the evidence so strong against him, he acknowledged all, and, in the result, was turned out of the service.

After this, who can doubt the old proverb, “Conscience makes cowards of us all.”

CONVALESCENT ; OR, SCENTED EGGS.
FATAL SWIM.
CHASED BY A SHARK.

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BATHING in the summer in the Mediterranean is generally a midddy's greatest amusement, and the more perfect he becomes in the art of swimming the greater fun he gets out of his aquatic holiday. As a youngster I was a very powerful swimmer, in fact I could float and swim in every conceivable attitude ; often I have dived off one side a frigate at the same time that an egg has been thrown from the other, and have caught it before it reached the bottom—this being a very favourite amusement with some of us. Another of our games was playing leap frog in the water, and woe betide the boy who had to do frog if he was not a favourite, for the one who had to leap would send him down with such mortal force, by taking a spring off

his back, that, for the moment, he would fancy he could never come up again, and when we mustered a dozen in the water it was most amusing to see the "rough and tumble" one over the other, like so many porpoises on a hot day in a dead calm.

One day in the week was set aside as a field, or egg day, when we were allowed to purchase three dozen eggs each; of course they were not fresh, so we got them cheap, namely, twopence a dozen; then all who were going to bathe pulled near the shore in boats, the eggs being placed in the bow and stern, and as soon as any one of us was prepared to take the leap from the boat into the water, all the rest flew to the eggs, and began shelling the unfortunate individual until he dived and got well out of the way, and so it went on until all were in the water, and then began a raid on heads.

At the first opportunity we would swim to our supply of eggs, take two or three, then bide our time to get a crack at each other ;

I can assure you it is no joke for two or three *convalescent* eggs to explode on your face and head at the same time: your only chance is to shell your opponent quickly and dive out of his way; of course, when he looks round to see who has struck him, you are far away under water, out of sight. The fun on a field or egg-day is immense, but it is, to say the least of it, a very defensive, and certainly *offensive* amusement.

On one occasion we had been in the water more than an hour, diving and playing all kind of games, the sun being frightfully hot (which it usually is in the Mediterranean summer), when one of the party proposed we should start and swim round a French brig that lay at anchor about a mile and a half off. Four of us agreed, and at once started. We accomplished the task with very little difficulty, beyond suffering from the intense heat. I kept my head moderately cool, by repeatedly dipping it

under water; unfortunately the three others did nothing of the kind, consequently they suffered much from the powerful sun.

As soon as we returned on board we met the first lieutenant, who was very angry indeed at our being absent from divisions. We informed him that the swim had taken longer than we had expected, but the explanation proved of no avail, for he stopped our leave, as a punishment—not that the other three suffered much by that, for on the second day they were all down with brain fever, which increased daily.

The doctor was at his wits' end to keep them cool; the ship was swung broadside to the sea-breeze, ice was applied to their heads, and two or three doctors were in constant attendance from the fleet, but all to no purpose; they could not save them, and in less than ten days from the fatal swim the three poor boys were dead.

During this time the doctors paid me great attention, and constantly inquired if

I had any pain in my head. Happily, I had not, and, beyond the deep grief at the death of my messmates, I never felt better in my life, which I attributed to the fact of keeping my head wet during the otherwise fatal swim.

I recollect another swim which nearly proved fatal to me. We were laying off Alexandria one morning, amusing ourselves with aquatic sports; in the midst of our enjoyment, we were surprised by the officers of the watch hailing us from the ship, and, in tones of unmistakable authority, ordering us to come on board immediately; as we dare not disobey, we swam back to the ship, on nearing which I remarked great anxiety depicted on the faces of all on deck, and also that the officer of the watch was levelling a rifle apparently at my head.

By this time most of my messmates were far ahead of me, and some of them safe in the boat astern of the ship. I was now the

last in the water, and, as I observed all eyes directed to me, and the rifle again raised as if to shoot me, the whole affair became most puzzling. However, I soon realized the cause of the anxiety, for, just as I turned round to take hold of the gunwale of the boat, to my horror I saw, by the glint of his fin, that a shark was swimming rapidly in my wake. A cold shiver ran through me, and, feeling there was not a moment to be lost, I dived under the boat; on coming up the other side I was quickly hauled in by my messmates, and had the satisfaction of seeing the monster swim away, lashing his tail in evident disgust at the loss of his anticipated breakfast.

Arriving on board, the officer of the watch explained that the rifle was intended to shoot at the shark, should he have approached dangerously close.

The diplomacy displayed by the officer in all human probability saved at least one of our lives, for, had we seen the shark, the scare might have been most disastrous.

We had two regular sea-lawyers on board, viz., the boatswain, and the carpenter, who would often vie with each other in telling the biggest crammers.

On this occasion, sharks being the subject of much comment, the two gave us their experience of these sea monsters.

The old boatswain began by saying he didn't mind them in the least; in fact, at Port Royal, Jamaica, he had an old friend a shark—well known in the neighbourhood by the name of "Port Royal Tom." He was a very amiable old shark, and, beyond eating a man and a couple of boys every day, was perfectly harmless.

I at once enquired why Tom had not eaten him, to which he replied, with a groggy leer, and croaky voice,

"Lor' bless you, sir, I'm too well seasoned with 'baccy and rum for he; no, he's a dainty kind o' chap, he is, and don't take to dry goods."

After a good laugh at the old man's quaint remark, I persisted,

“Do you mean to say he never tried to bite you?”

“Well, no! I don't quite say that; for once, when we was a bathing together, he seemed to be a little out of temper, and began a lashin' of his tail, and was a going to turn over—which they always does when they's a going to bite; and, to show him I wasn't a bit afraid, I swims close up to him, and, just before he turns on his back, I gives him a squirt o' baccy juice right in his h'eye from the quid I was a chewin' of, and that settled the old chap. With a wink of his other h'eye at me, he turned round, and we swam about quite friendly like, and I never had no cause to complain no more of Port Royal Tom.”

Amidst peals of laughter, the old carpenter, who evidently was not going to be out-done by his friend, exclaimed, in a voice like a cracked peal of thunder,

“Port Royal Tom was a friend of mine too. One night, when we was a laying off

there, I came down late, and lost the boat, and, whilst I was a thinking how I should get aboard, Port Royal Tom hove in sight, no doubt looking for a land-lubber along shore for his supper. I jumps into the water, and, collaring of his head, whispered into his ear,

“ ‘I say, Tom, swim us to the ship on your back, and I’ll stand a piece of pork?’ ”

“ On this he gives a waggle with his left fin, which meant all right ; up I got on his back, and away we went, and I’m blowed if we wasn’t alongside afore the boat.”

A burst of merriment was at once aroused by these stories, in the midst of which the old boatswain turned to his friend, and, with a comical leer in his little, bright, twinkling eyes, said, in the most grave tone,

“ Bill, how can you tell sich lies ! ”

'ENRY 'ATCH; OR, DAYLIGHT JACK.

—:0:—

IF any one on board ship has a weakness of any kind, he is sure to gain a nick-name on its merits, and if it is a good fit, it becomes all the more amusing. Our first lieutenant was doubly blessed in this way, for he had two sobriquets—'Enry 'Atch, and Daylight Jack, the first from an explanation he once gave of an accident which occurred on board. The captain, one morning, hearing a heavy thud accompanied by a fall, sent for the first lieutenant, and said,

“What on earth is that smash, Mr. ——”

To which he replied,

“Please, sir, it is h'only 'Enry 'Atch; the captain of the 'ead; 'e 'as fallen down the 'atch-way, and 'urt 'is 'ead.”

The captain could hardly suppress a smile at this h-less explanation, and ever after the lieutenant went by the name of 'Enry

'Atch. The other sobriquet was acquired by his always getting up at daylight, winter or summer. I don't know if he hoped to find the early worm, or take a rise out of the sun by being up first; he certainly did not wait for the world to be aired (like some people I know), fearing the chance of a chill by being too early.

We were laying off Alexandria. During the fine weather the quarter-deck was his paradise, and his serpent was an old Egyptian bum-boat man, who would persist in coming alongside almost as soon as the lieutenant began his matutinal walk, much to his disgust; and he would, in the most peremptory manner, order the old man off till after the decks were washed, and early morning duties over.

On one occasion some of our men met the old Egyptian on shore, and the latter, pulling one of them by the arm, exclaimed,

"I say, Jack, vot you call him?—you first lootenant, I mean."

"Oh," replied Jack, with a broad grin on his face, "don't you know? Why, Daylight Jack, to be sure." Which name the old fellow kept repeating to himself, evidently trying to get it off by heart.

The following morning, after the decks had been washed, and the pipe to breakfast given, the old Egyptian, who had been laying off the ship in his boat, was allowed alongside; he immediately began to sell his fruits, vegetables, etc., and seeing the first lieutenant standing in the gangway, he looked up with a smile of recognition, evidently wishing to be on the most polite terms, and holding up a bunch of bananas, said,

"I say, Mr. Daylights, how you do dis morning, eh? You take de banana, eh?"

"You sweep," exclaimed the first lieutenant, with a scowl, "what on earth do you mean;" and shaking his fist in the face of the poor old man, who thought he had been doing the extreme civil, he added, "shove

off directly, and never let me see you alongside again."

To the intense amusement of those on deck, the old boatman grinned, and with a knowing look in his eyes, as if a sudden thought had occurred to him that he had not given the officer his full name, touching his cap, he said,

"Oh ! I make de pardon, sir, I did forget ; Mr. Daylights Jack. Now you take de banana, eh, sir ?"

At this repetition the lieutenant's rage knew no bounds, and stamping his foot vehemently, he shouted out,

"You blackguard ! you, shove off immediately, and never dare come near the ship any more." Then turning to the master-at-arms, who was standing at his side, he added "Mind, Mr. —, my orders are strictly carried out."

Finding it was all up with him and his future dealings with the ship, the true character of the Egyptian showed itself,

as digging his boat-hook into the ship's side with a spiteful blow, preparatory to shoving-off he exclaimed,

“Eh, Mr. Daylights, you call me black-guard, eh, sir! you blackguard-and-a-half, you! How you like dat, eh?”

Whereupon he shoved off, and pulled away as quickly as his arms would let him. We saw no more of the individual, for on the following day we sailed, and he thus escaped being had up before the authorities, much to the annoyance of the first lieutenant.

A TEMPTING BAIT.

—:0:—

WE were laying off Trieste, and, the day being lovely, some of us youngsters asked and obtained permission to go on shore for a ride; I, being one of the party, started off to my chest to get a favourite bamboo cane.

It being summer, we were all dressed in blue jackets, and white trousers. The boat to convey us on shore was now alongside, and I rushed up the companion on deck, in an ecstasy of delight at the prospect of a good gallop—being anxious to be first in the boat. Just as I approached the side, I saw what I thought was one of my messmates leaning over, apparently looking into the boat below; without a thought of the consequences (for I could not resist the tempting bait), I up with my cane, and gave him a

sharp cut across the back, which made him jump from his position like a shot, and, turning quickly round, he exclaimed,

"Was the devil's that?"

At the sound of his voice, I looked up, and saw, to my horror, that it was the first lieutenant.

From laughing and enjoying the joke, I became the picture of despair, and, apologising most humbly, I declared I had no idea it was he, or I would not have dreamt of taking such a liberty. To which he replied, with an expression of rage on his hot face,

"I don't believe a word of it, you young scamp; go to the mast-head at once. I'll teach you to make sure another time who your victim really is, before you attempt to perpetrate your vulgar jokes."

Finding nothing I could say would help me, I handed my cane to the quarter-master, and wended my way to the mast-head.

My messmates, in their frolicsome humour,

beckoned me, as they were pulling ashore in the boat, to accompany them—evidently much amused at the horrible mistake I had made—and this did not tend to increase my contentment with my lot. However, being a little bit of a philosopher, I thought what could not be cured had better be endured as comfortably as circumstances would admit, so I made myself as snug as I could on my wooden perch till sunset, when I was hailed by the first lieutenant to come down ; after a severe reprimand, he informed me that my leave was stopped for a month, and expressed the hope that, by my constantly seeing him, I should never again make the unfortunate mistake I had done, however tempting the bait.

I was then allowed to go below, where I found the mocking fun and jeers of my messmates harder to bear than the stoppage of my leave, or the disappointment of the gallop on shore.

TAKING THE CHILL OFF.

—:o:—

I REMEMBER being another time mast-headed while lying at Trieste. It was in the depth of winter, and, as I held the exalted post of midshipman of the jolly boat, one of my duties was to land the working party every morning at daylight.

On one occasion I was late, and the first lieutenant, seeing the boat lying alongside with all the men ready in her, inquired who they were waiting for. On being informed it was Mr. Bower, he immediately ordered one of the midshipmen of the watch into the boat to take charge and shove off, adding that he would settle with me for keeping the boat waiting. At this moment I appeared on deck, and, to my intense astonishment, was peremptorily ordered by this officer to go to the mast-head at once.

Finding there was no alternative, up I went, and took possession of my old quarters.

The weather was bitterly cold, and I felt it the more, from the fact of having just turned out of a jolly warm hammock; in a very short time, a feeling of numbness seemed to creep over every limb; my teeth chattered, and chill after chill appeared to be racing each other down my back: fearing something serious might happen to me, if I lost consciousness from the biting cold that was now paralyzing my whole body, I lashed myself to the rigging to the best of my ability; soon after doing so my senses must have forsaken me, for the rest was chaos.

How long this state of things would have lasted, I cannot tell, as, had it not been for the jolly-boat being again required, to land some officers, no doubt I should have been forgotten altogether. On this second occasion again no Mr. Bower was to be found—a fact which caused the lieutenant

to remember sending me, long since, to the mast-head ; they then hailed me to come down, and hearing no response, the quarter-master was sent up, when he found me, not only speechless, but insensible ; he at once shouted to the deck for assistance to get me down, whereupon two or three men were sent up ; by their aid I was unlashed and lowered by means of ropes into the top, and thence to the deck, whence I was carried below, where the doctor, after some time, succeeded in bringing me round. When I was quite myself again, he said I was lowered only just in the nick of time, for had I remained there another half-hour, his services would have been of no avail.

I was very glad to learn that the lieutenant was severely lectured by the captain for his unfeeling thoughtlessness : for myself, being nearly frozen to death at the mast-head was deemed sufficient punishment for my being late for the boat in the morning, or, in technical terms, "neglect of duty."

Ever after, I took good care not to be last in the boat, during the time I was midshipman of her ; and I often used to think what that extra five minutes laziness in bed might have cost me, and those to whom I was dear.

TURTLE SHOOTING IN AND OUT (VERY MUCH) OF SEASON.

—:0:—

ON the southern part of the coast of Syria, during the summer months, turtle are often to be met with, floating on the surface of the water, where they come to indulge in a bask, and bask in the sun; drowsiness generally soon overtakes them; but, as the wily creatures are probably aware by this time that their flesh is much sought after (particularly by the aldermanic race), they invariably sleep with one eye open—hence the difficulty of their capture, as they dive immediately on hearing or seeing anything approach. So sensitive are they on these points, that I have known many a probable capture rendered void by a slight sneeze of one of the crew, and that not within musket-shot range.

I remember on one occasion, being on that part of the coast, in one of the Royal yachts, waiting the embarkation of an exalted personage, when the officer of the watch came to my cabin, informing me that a large turtle was asleep on the water, not far from the ship. Rushing on deck, I beheld the monster sure enough, when I immediately ordered a boat to be got ready, and arming myself with a rifle, accompanied by one or two of my companions, was soon in pursuit.

As turtle must always be approached under sail, the noise of the oars being sure to disturb them, we had to make a considerable detour, to get to the windward of the fish. Having reached the desired position, we ceased pulling, hoisted the sail, and were fast nearing the turtle, myself in the bow of the boat, with rifle in hand. All was excitement now, particularly as we could observe many glasses from the ship levelled at us, evidently watching our movements.

At last we approached within a few yards

of the unctuous fish, so without losing another moment, I levelled and fired, hitting the monster, whereon some of the men gave vent to their admiration by exclaiming, "Well done, sir, a capital shot, you hit him beautifully, no more basking in the sun for that fellow;" at the same time a faint hurrah reached us from the ship. We then prepared to secure our prize, which, being of very large dimensions, we had some difficulty in getting into the boat. We succeeded, however, and were soon on our way back, picturing to ourselves the innumerable dishes of turtle soup, steaks, pies, etc., in store for us; when suddenly, and as if by magic, every one in the boat began sniffing, and exclaiming, "My goodness what a smell, what can it be?" All eyes were now turned in the direction of the fish, which proved to be the culprit, as it was found that I had not only shot a *dead* turtle, but one whose body was absolutely putrid. The frightful stench nearly overpowered the men, and

they bundled the horrid thing overboard again.

The fact was, as long as the salt water remained in the shell, the turtle was not offensive; but directly it began to leak out, leaving uncovered the decayed parts, the smell became unbearable.

No one could conceive the annoyance I felt, yet I could not help laughing at the disagreeable *contretemps*. Arriving alongside we were received with great interest, all on board wondering why we had sent such a fine turtle back to his element; when we explained the reason, the laughter was great amongst my friends, but I did not feel inclined to be *too* hardly chaffed, for, after all, 'twas I who hit the beast, so I came to the conclusion that the "sell," great as it was, was no fault of mine. If we had only found out that the thing was dead, before hauling it into the boat, affairs would not have been quite so bad. However, it caused many a good laugh amongst us, and the story

was told ever afterwards against me, more particularly when my shooting powers happened to be the topic of conversation.

MORAL.

Trust not too much to tempting appearances.

MASTER JACKO AFLOAT.



Of all the shipmates I ever had, Jacko, a large dog-faced monkey, was the most mischievous. He belonged to one of our lieutenants, and, notwithstanding his abominable tricks, he was a great favourite with all on board.

On one occasion, in the midst of dinner, we heard a great noise in the steward's berth; on looking up, we saw Master Jacko with the best part of a splendid Stilton cheese tucked under one arm, making off full-tear up the companion-ladder, and the steward, in hot pursuit, rushing along the deck. Up the rigging flew Jacko, when, finding the steward did not follow him, he quietly perched himself on the cross-trees, and began to devour the Stilton. Seeing no amount of coaxing would make

him come down, two of the sailors went up, hoping at least to save some of the cheese. Jacko watched them till they got close to him, when, with a chattering grin, he let go the cheese, which dropped on the deck and was broken to pieces. After a short tussle with the sailors, he bolted away down the rigging, and, shortly afterwards, had the impertinence to appear at dessert in his usual form, as if nothing had happened. We had been speculating whether he would dare show his face that night, when the old doctor, who was a great favourite of Jacko's, spied him peeping down the skylight; in another moment, he had swung himself from the lamp on to the table—most dexterously avoiding collision with the glasses, dishes, plates, or decanters—and, after gazing anxiously into the faces around him, he took up his position by the side of the old doctor's plate, where he appeared to ignore all idea of the mischief that he had been guilty of: and we were so amused at his

impudence, and the apparent innocence of his look that we found it impossible to punish him.

Our captain, who was a man of very refined taste, had collected some very beautiful nick-nacks from the different places he had visited, amongst which were some handsome china vases.

One day, when Master Jacko was larking about in the cabin, with his usual mischievous curiosity he clawed hold of one of the vases, and was in the act of putting his paw inside it to feel if there was anything at the bottom, when it fell from his grasp, and was, unfortunately, smashed to pieces on the deck. The captain, who was seated at his table, copying music in a large manuscript book, turned suddenly round, and, with an oath, exclaimed,

“You beast! what devil’s mischief are you up to now?” and, thereupon, finding his most valuable vase smashed into fifty pieces, his rage knew no bounds: seizing

Jacko by the hind legs, he literally swung him over his shoulder and banged him against the bulkhead. The severity of the blow almost stunned poor old Jacko, who slunk off into a corner, utterly refusing to be comforted by anybody, and it was night before he moved; then he made his way to the doctor's cabin, and, after a great deal of chattering and whining, as if explaining to the old doctor all his grief, he laid himself down by his side, and soon they were both, if one could judge from the profound snoring, in the land of dreams.

The appearance of the two, turned in for the night, was most absurd. The dear old doctor (who certainly was not a handsome man, though as good a fellow as ever lived) lay on his back, with his mouth wide open, while Jacko—also open-mouthed—reclined gracefully on his bosom, with one paw round his neck, and his little drab, wrinkled face reposing on the old doctor's cheek, both snoring vigorously.

Two days after the smashing of the vase the captain's cabin was again in utter confusion through Master Jacko—occasioned this time by a fierce fight between him and the steward, who was thrashing Jacko vigorously with a large ruler: on our inquiring his reason for beating the monkey so unmercifully, the man replied,

“Why, I came in just now, sir, and found the brute on the table, opening the leaves of the captain's manuscript music-book, dipping his paw into the ink-bottle, and smearing page after page with h'ink till you could not see a line of the music that master had been a collecting for years;” and, wiping the perspiration from his face, he added, pointing to Jacko, “I believe, gentlemen, he is the devil, and there will be no peace in the ship till he is out of it. Only the other day he stole the h'egg that the captain was eating for his breakfast, and, as it was the only one to be had in the ship, it was 'ard lines.”

"Are you sure of that?" asked the doctor, who was now trying to soothe Jacko and keep him from chattering—no doubt swearing, in his own language, at the steward.

"Sure, did you say, sir? I saw him do it. Just as the captain had taken the first mouthful of the h'egg, the brute leaped up behind him, and, putting his paw over his shoulder, whipped the h'egg out of the cup as clean as a whistle, and bolted off up the rigging to devour it; and I make no doubt the beast is conjuring up something now in his mischievous brain."

"Well," said the doctor, pulling his right-hand whisker, and looking kindly at the man, "I think you have punished him enough this time, considering he seldom does any serious harm, so let me take him away, and I'll promise to keep him out of mischief."

"I don't know what you call 'arm, sir. Arn't spoiling all this 'MS.' 'arm, sir—the

work of years ; then breaking a wase that no money can replace. I should call it h'awful 'arm, sir ; and I do 'ope the captain will have the creature sent away, when he finds out this fresh mischief. The wust of it is, I shall be blamed for allowing the thing to get into the cabin, but he is so sly you cannot be h'up to 'im. If I locks the door, he drops down the skylight, or crawls in at one of the ports, and there arn't no keeping him out no how," and, shaking his fist at Jacko, he added, "Let me catch you here again ; if I don't half kill you, it's odd to me."

The old monkey, grinning and chattering with great gusto, now followed the doctor to his cabin, and seated himself in the corner, while the latter dressed for dinner. He remained perfectly quiet for a short time, when suddenly he bounded on to the port, and, leaning over, began to make a loud, chattering noise. Before the doctor had time to ascertain what was the great attraction

Master Jacko had dropped from the port into a boat that had just pulled alongside—much to the astonishment and alarm of the old bumboat woman, who commenced shrieking wildly. When the old doctor looked out, he saw the monkey and the old woman rolling over each other in the boat, smashing eggs, fruit, etc., and sending vegetables and flowers overboard, while the old man, who was holding on to the ship with a boat-hook, was at his wits' end to know what to do ; he dared not let go (owing to the strength of the tide), and was not near enough to get at the monkey.

In the midst of this confusion, the captain came alongside ; seeing the fray he ordered the monkey immediately to be chained up—this being the severest punishment that could be inflicted on any of the simious tribe. When Jacko was handed out of the boat, he was in a perfect fume—his face wearing an injured expression, as if the old woman had been to blame, for not allowing

him to help himself to her fruit. This time he had met his match, for the old woman held him like grim death by the neck, and then sat upon him till he dropped the splendid bunch of grapes he was in the act of conveying to his mouth.

When the captain arrived on board and heard of his spoilt M.S. he was wild with rage ; and had it not been for his friendship for Jacko's master, he would have had the animal killed on the spot. Even the doctor was obliged to acknowledge the justice of the punishment inflicted on his old bed-fellow.

Of course we had to pay the damages, and they were rather considerable : Jacko was heavy, and the old woman fat and big, so you may imagine they squashed not a few things, in their rough and tumble tussle.

Jacko's residence with us, was, however, drawing to a close. The captain's time was up, and his appointed successor had written announcing his intention to bring his wife

on board; this determined us at once to pack off the monkey, bag and baggage, for it would have been impossible for any lady to tolerate him.

The officer to whom the animal belonged was at his wits' end to find a home for him, when happily an old ship-keeper, who had care of some yachts that were laid up for the winter, begged to have charge of Master Jacko. He was accordingly sent on board his new ship—a change which he did not relish at all, as he was obliged to be chained to a ring-bolt in the deck of the cabin.

On the following morning some of our fellows visited him, and so delighted was he to see his old shipmates again, that, on parting, he not only broke his chain but actually took to the water—a thing rarely done by a monkey; but—although scarcely a day passed without our hailing our old friend—the solitude and confinement of his new home proved too great a strain on his excitable nerves, and he gradually pined away and

died. . The old ship-keeper declared that the animal had died of a broken heart, for on opening the body after death, he discovered therein, not only his own spectacles, which had been missing some time, but the heart of poor Jacko broken in three pieces !

OTTER BY NAME AND (PARTLY)
BY NATURE.

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DURING the disturbances between Russia and Greece, when Capo-d'Istria was elected president *pro tem* of the latter kingdom (chiefly by Russian influence), we were one day, I think in the year 1831, lying off Napoli-di-Romania (the then seat of government), when information was sent us that the "Hellas" frigate had been blown up by the Greeks; to prevent her falling into the hands of the Russians, we immediately started for Poros harbour—the scene of the explosion—and on arriving off the island of Spezzia we had the choice of two passages, either between the island of Hydra and the main, or outside the island.

We were anxiously expecting the packet

with important despatches, and being uncertain by which route she would come, the captain decided on taking the inner passage himself, and sending one of the cutters with twelve hands in charge of an experienced officer, round outside the island, to rendezvous at the other end, so as to make certain of intercepting the mail. It was then about sunset, and after the comforts of the officer and men had been looked to, the cutter shoved off, with the usual "God speed" from their shipmates.

The officer in charge of the boat, whose name was Otter, was one of the best and most powerful swimmers I ever met with, and luckily so—as otherwise I do not know what would have been the fate of the crew under his charge. As it was, his gallantry was put to a severe test—and well indeed did he come out of it; for the judgment and self-denying qualities displayed by him on this occasion, were the admiration of everyone.

Previous to the boat leaving the ship, she was supplied with blue lights and rockets, to enable her, in the event of reaching the rendezvous at the other end before daylight, to show her position; the signal would, of course, have been answered by us. On our reaching the spot where we hoped to pick her up, not a vestige could we see, consequently we burnt a blue light, which, in the distance, appeared to be answered, but only as it were momentarily, for no sooner was it a-light, than it was out again. We thought this strange, so burnt another, and also fired a rocket; but as this time we received no reply, and the wind failing us, we had no option but to remain where we were, occasionally burning a blue light.

When daylight approached, nothing could be seen of the boat; and fortunately a light air springing up, we retraced what we thought would be her track at the back of the island, and discovered her pulling out

of a small cove—officers and crew apparently very seedily dressed.

When they came alongside their tale was soon told. They saw our first blue light, but being a long way off, and fearing their return signal would not be seen by us, the officer ordered the man to go half-way up the mast to burn it; as soon as it was lighted, the sparks came showering down on the crew in such quantities, as to oblige them to rush on one side of the boat; the suddenness of this movement, together with the leverage caused by the man half-way up the mast (this was the moment we caught a glimpse of the light from the ship), resulted in the boat's capsizing, and precipitating all her crew into the water. The night, it should be observed, was fine, though dark.

With the instinct of a swimmer, the officer's attention was first given to those of his party who could not swim, of whom there were only two. These, with the

assistance of some oars, were easily enabled to keep afloat, after their first fright was over, in charge of two swimmers ; while the rest were employed in diving, unclasping the mast, clearing away sails, etc. After righting the boat, they succeeded in securing to the thwarts the masts, oars, and other gear, so as to give her all the floating power possible under the circumstances. They then placed the two non-swimmers into her, cautioning them to keep very steady.

Feeling assured that the two men were, comparatively, safe, the officer with the rest of his men proceeded to the fore part of the boat, where the former, taking the painter, made a noose in its end, which he placed over his shoulder so as to keep his arms free ; then, swimming to its full extent, he desired the men to cut up the boat's sheets in lengths for the same purpose, slipping the nooses over their shoulders, and attaching the opposite ends at equal

distances to each side of the painter ; they then all struck out for the shore, and succeeded, after a four hours' struggle, in towing the swamped boat to the only possible landing place at the back of the island.

If this feat does not deserve praise, may I ask where there is one that does ? These are the men the service ought to be proud of. His promotion, to say the least of it, was well merited.

“ Peace to his ashes.”

HOW I BECAME A WARRIOR.



DURING the Crimean war, from over fatigue and anxiety, my health was much impaired; after the blockade of Sebastopol, it gave way utterly, and I was ordered by the doctor to Therapia, on the Bosphorus, for change of air. I was so weak that I had to be hoisted over the side in a cot, and was then conveyed in a troop-ship to one of the Sultan's palaces, which had been lent as a temporary hospital for the English officers.

The soft and balmy air, together with perfect rest effected a rapid change in my health—almost too much so for real good, as my appetite increased alarmingly, and I ate more than I could digest in my weak state; in consequence, horrid, deep-seated boils came out on my body, which were so dreadfully painful that I could scarcely sit.

During this time I was rowed out daily on the lovely Bosphorus by an old Turk. My servant placed some soft feather pillows in the stern of the boat for me to sit on comfortably, and thus, with the aid of the Turk, who was most kind and anxious for my ease, I was made snug for the matutinal pull ; this I thoroughly enjoyed. My Turkish boatman could not speak a word of English, so all communication between us was carried on by signs : for instance, if he pulled too fast, or at all jerkey, I made a wry face, as if suffering, then he would be more careful. If I wished for a glass of lemonade, which we always had in the boat, I would point to the locker where the bottles were kept, then to my mouth ; the old fellow would immediately lay on his oars, and help me to some : in return for these attentions I frequently gave him tobacco, which I permitted him to smoke, much to his enjoyment.

One of these excursions I particularly remember ; the air was lovely—the sunlight

dancing on the rippling little wavelets most fascinating—the dip of the old boatman's oar in the water, and the monotonous creaking of the rollocks almost soothing. I was sitting with half-closed eyes, my thoughts far, far away o'er the ocean, when I was startled from my reverie by the old man suddenly resting on his oars; gazing at me with a puzzled look in his small black eyes, he grunted out,

“Hey sire, you vounded, eh; Moscov, Moscov (Turkish for Russian): boong, boong?”

Not understanding the old fellow for the moment, I laughed and nodded, at which he appeared overjoyed, and grinning all over his sun-burnt face, he added vehemently,

“Bono, Johnny, bono, Johnny!” (a term of praise the Turks have for brave Englishmen.)

He evidently thought I had been wounded in the war that was then raging against the bitter enemy of his country (Russia); as,

to my astonishment, he dubbed me a wounded warrior; but, from the position of the wounds I was then suffering from (considering they were all at the back) the old man's idea of valour must have been strange indeed, unless his notion of a warrior was founded on the adage that he who is hit while running away "may live to fight another day."

Often when I lay on my comfortable bed during convalescence, did my thoughts revert to the time, many years before, when I had seen the same palace under very different circumstances—all then was peace and magnificence.

One event in particular was called to my memory. I was, as usual, at the mast-head for some boyish misdemeanour, I suppose. The night was lovely, the moon reflected on the water like glass, the sultan's palace a perfect blaze with lights, and the music of his splendid band making the night charming with its sweet melody. My enjoyment

was great, being very fond of music, and instead of feeling under punishment, I hoped against hope I should have been forgotten by the officer of the watch (as I had been before) and be allowed to remain on my perch all night. But no such good luck. Had I been miserably cold and suffering, and the officer of the watch fully occupied in studying his own comfort, my chance would have been much greater of being forgotten altogether. But to my disgust, at midnight I was hailed to come down, and told to go below to bed.

Having quite recovered my health, I quitted my comfortable quarters at the hospital, and bidding farewell to the old Turkish boatman, I again joined my ship.

Some years afterwards, when peace was restored, and the Crimean war almost forgotten, I visited Constantinople again. I was then in command of the royal yacht "Osborne," and arrived at that place with His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales on board.

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Landing one morning, who should I see on the beach but my old boatman. The recognition was mutual, and the old creature shuffled up to me, and after making a profound salaam, exclaimed.

“Bono Johnny! bono Johnny!” and evidently informed his friends around that I was a wounded warrior.

After tipping the poor old fellow, I walked up the street, and meeting some Turkish women, it brought to recollection a startling affair that occurred to me years ago when I was a small boy, almost in the very place I was now walking.

It was the first time I had been to Constantinople, or seen a Turkish woman in a yashmak; and because I stared, probably in a most rude way at one, she gave me an awful bang on one side of the face; the passers-by roared with laughter, and I had to beat a hasty retreat into the first shop near to get out of the way of her savage anger.

Of course, I had no idea at the time how Turkish women disliked being stared at, more particularly by a "dog of a Christian;" but the lesson she gave me had a very good effect on my future conduct, as I always took care to ascertain if the gaze would be appreciated before I allowed my eyes to linger on the face of a Turkish woman, or rather on her eye—for that is all you can see, since the yashmak covers the rest.

DRAWING OUT OF ACTION.



Enough has already been written and said of the Crimean war, and the attack on the forts of Sebastopol by the allied squadrons on the 17th of October, 1854, when, if my memory serves me rightly, thirty-eight ships of the line were engaged, besides smaller vessels. I shall merely relate here a few of the incidental circumstances.

The success of the attack would have been certain had it not been for the unfortunate exploding of a large powder magazine in the French batteries: to the disappointment of all engaged the ships were consequently, towards evening, ordered to draw out of action.

As soon as the din of firing had ceased, we remarked that most of us had become deaf, and more particularly those engaged

between decks ; this was no matter of surprise, considering the heavy and incessant cannonading that had lasted for hours.

After getting well out of range of the batteries, the ships formed line, and proceeded slowly to the old anchorage, about seven or eight miles distant, employing the time in clearing the decks of the innumerable splinters caused by shot and shell.

The evening was lovely ; scarcely a breath of wind disturbed the surface of the water, and no sound was to be heard save the gentle ripple of the waves under the bow, caused by the lash of the screw propeller. When the moon rose upon the multitude of ships, with their open ports, and fighting lanterns lighted, the appearance presented was more that of a floating town than anything else.

Beautiful, however, as was the scene, many on board those stately vessels were oppressed with saddened thoughts—the reflection of events that had passed in the last

twelve hours ; dear and valued friends, who were that morning full of life and brightness, now lay cold and dead on the deck, where they had so recently stood by their guns and fought so bravely for England, home, and liberty.

As the ships glided through the water the flag-lieutenant reported that the signal was flying to "bury the dead." Thereupon the captain, with most of the officers, accompanied by the doctor, assembled on the main-deck, where, between the guns, were placed the mortal remains of those who had lost their lives on that day ; on receiving the necessary instructions, the sail-makers commenced their mournful work of sewing up the bodies in hammocks, in all cases finishing towards the head, with the object of putting the last stitch through the nose, as a proof of dissolution, without which "superstitious Jack" would never rest content. Two thirty-two pound shot were then secured to the feet of each, and the bodies

placed on gratings, separately arranged along the gangway, and covered with the Union-Jack.

Officers and men now stood ready to receive the clergyman, who, as he approached—his white surplice shining conspicuously in the bright moonlight against the dark blue uniform of all present—commenced, in solemn tones, to read the burial service: the effect was most impressive—and there was not a man or boy in the ship but appeared deeply affected by the touching ceremony. When the clergyman came to the passage, "We therefore commit their bodies to the deep," he paused; the men in charge tilted the gratings, one by one, and the bodies, sliding off with a deep hollow sound, were plunged for ever beneath the waves.

The ceremony over, we dispersed—a mournful feeling in our hearts, which was not lessened by the splashing sounds from the ships near, on board which similar sad rites were being performed.

Shortly after this we reached the anchorage, taking up our allotted berths, and after making all snug, the pipe-down was given, and glad indeed were we to take advantage of it.

On reaching the ward-room (our dining-place), where all the bulkheads had been removed to clear for action, we found the cloth laid on the deck ; but the only fare provided on this occasion was salt beef and pork, cooked the previous day—fires never being allowed on board ship during the time the magazine is open ; chairs, of course, were out of the question, so we had to squat *à la* Turk, and make the best of everything.

After the fatigue and excitement of the day we were all dreadfully worn out, both in mind and body, and were heartily glad, when the lights were ordered out, to retire for the night.

The following day, as we were engaged repairing damages, a strange vessel hove in sight, the yards of which, as they gradually

rose above the horizon, appeared to have a number of animals strung to them. Glasses were levelled at this strange phenomenon, and on her nearer approach we discovered her to be a three-masted troopship from Constantinople with soldiers on board. Her captain, wishing to supply the fleet with fresh provisions, and having no other available stowage room, hit upon the novel expedient of slinging dead fowls by the neck to the foot ropes of the top-gallant yards; turkeys to the topsail yards; and sheep to the lower yards, shoulder to shoulder—hence the strange appearance of the ship.

No sooner had the vessel cast anchor than she was surrounded by the boats of the different ships; her captain experienced no difficulty in disposing of his hanging cargo, as much to his own satisfaction, as to that of the buyers.

There was a troopship employed in the Crimea (and a fine ship she was) called the

Golden-Fleece. If she were the vessel in question, her name was most applicable, considering the *golden* harvest reaped, principally from the *fleecy* nature of its dead stock.

A ROLAND FOR AN OLIVER.

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I WAS on board one of Her Majesty's ships, engaged in getting the "Great Britain" off shore when she stranded in Dundrum Bay. We invariably took advantage of the neap-tides (because no work could be done) to run down in the ship to Kingstown Harbour, Dublin, which was comparatively near, for the purpose of getting a little relaxation and society, and we always enjoyed it much—fully realising the proverbial hospitality of the Irish people. While in harbour the ship was secured alongside the wharf, with a brow to the shore; when she was opened to the public, we were inundated with visitors, the result of which was invitations to dinners, balls and parties to all the officers.

One afternoon, during my watch, the quartermaster approached with a party of

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ladies and gentlemen, begging permission to see the ship; on presenting me their cards, I not only granted permission, but offered my services to shew them round, which were cheerfully accepted. On commencing my agreeable task, I remarked that one young lady of the party was *most* bewitching; to her (weak mortal as I was) I paid marked attention.

I ransacked my brain for pretty speeches and complimentary action, so as to engage her attention, till we came to my cabin, when I begged the party to enter; after admiring a few nic-nacks I had brought from distant countries, they returned to the passage, when I said to the young lady in question,

“By the way, did you notice that charming picture behind my door?”

“No,” she replied, “I never saw one.”

“Then pray come back and look at it,” I said; “for it is the prettiest picture I ever saw in my life.”

Entering the cabin again, she perceived a large looking-glass behind the door. After gazing in it for a second, she smiled cynically at me, which I interpreted "look out for squalls," and passing out of the cabin, she turned to her mother, who was approaching us, and said,

"You had better go in, mamma, and see this gentleman's beautiful picture; no doubt you will be as pleased as I have been with his blarney."

Finding I did not press the elder lady to make a picture in the same way, she shook her finger at me, and with a slight curl of her lip, said,

"I'll tell you what I think of you."

To which I replied, with a smile, "Oh, pray do!" of course, fancying it was something complimentary; and to my urgent request to tell me at once, she replied, laughing,

"Not now; but before I leave the ship, you shall know what I really think you are."

Finding I could not then get her opinion of me, I proposed we should adjourn to the ward-room, to which they all agreed, and we were soon discussing the merits of ship's biscuit and pale sherry. By the time they rose to take their leave I was on quite friendly terms with the family, and received an invitation from the mamma to call the first time I went on shore.

Arriving on deck and approaching the gangway, after wishing her friends good-bye, I held my fair Inamorata's hand tightly in mine, and said,

"Now for your promise, for I shall not let this little hand go till you tell me what I am."

By this time there were many listeners to our little badinage, at which they seemed highly amused; and when the mamma had crossed the brow on to the quay, she turned round, and finding me still holding her daughter's hand, exclaimed,

"Now, Mary, are you coming? do you

see you are stopping the way—some gentlemen are waiting to get on board.”

“All right, mamma,” she replied; and turning to me, she added, “Now, if you let go my hand, I will tell you what you are.”

As I released my hold, she exclaimed with gusto,

“You are a great big fat ‘hombog,’ that’s what you are!”

She then rushed across the brow to join her friends, amidst peals of laughter from numbers of people—some of my messmates included, and my face fell to zero, which amused them all the more. Even the sentinel on the gangway forgot for the moment all idea of discipline, and gave way to spasmodic giggles, which positively caused him to “ground arms” in order to steady himself.

My position at this moment was far from pleasant, but I joined grimly in the laugh, feeling it was the best thing to do—on the principle that it is better to grasp a difficulty

than run away from it. Soon after, happily for me, all attention was directed to a distinguished officer coming on board, whom I had the honour of knowing at Corfu ; and as he passed me on the deck, followed by his aides-de-camp, he said,

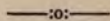
“Halloa, Master Bower! at your old tricks again, eh?”

To which I replied,

“It appears so, sir ; but this time I have not got off scot free, anyhow.”

After dinner I began to reflect on my afternoon’s escapade, and must own the result was in favour of the lady, and I came to the conclusion she was not far out in dubbing me a humbug, for as far as my fair friends are concerned, I think I am a little bit of one.

THE PARTING ADIEU.



As "The Drops" have ceased falling for the present, I will now say farewell to my kind friends and supporters, and hoist the signal, "May happiness attend you;" which I hope will be *literally* rendered by my publisher, not as it was on an occasion of two admirals parting company.

The senior one, on relinquishing his command, was passing through the squadron, with the signal flying "Success to you," whereupon the junior admiral ordered the signal to be made, "May happiness attend you;" by some unfortunate mistake, a wrong flag was hoisted, and his kind farewell was rendered, "May hanging attend you." The marked delay in answering the above signal (and no wonder) caused the signal-books to be referred to, and the mistake discovered, which I need scarcely add was promptly rectified.

Finis.

ACROSTIC.

M odel of all a sailor's pride,
A dmired by all who ever saw thee,
D ear ship, adieu ! another bride
A nd other scenes are now before me.
G lorious and happy hours I've passed
A mongst thy mids and gallant crew,
S uccceeding years nor fortune's blast,
C an ever damp my love for you.
A dieu ! once more, and may your name
R emain for ever on the wings of fame.

—*The Saucy AAAA's.*

The above lines were dedicated in memory of the dear old ship, "The Madagascar," on board of which many of the events in the foregoing pages occurred.





